Listing of the Claims:

Please replace the original claim set with the following replacement claim set.

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

1.　　(Currently Amended) A method of improving alphabetic speech recognition by a speech recognition engine, comprising:

receiving a first spoken alphabetic character input comprising plural alphabetic characters from a user;

passing the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user through a speech recognition engine;

at the speech recognition engine, recognizing the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;

querying the user for verification that the recognized alphabetic character input is the same as the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;

if the recognized alphabetic character input is not the same as the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user, receiving from the user a dual tone multi-frequency (DTMF) key tone for each of the first spoken alphabetic characters received from the user; ~~and~~

if one alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user matches the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user, designating the one alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user that matches the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user as a correct alphabetic character input[[.]]:

<u>prior to designating the alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user as a correct alphabetic character input requested from the user, determining whether an alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF tones received from the user sounds like the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;</u>

querying the user to determine whether the alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user match the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;

if more than one alphabetic character string is determined to be associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user that sound like the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user, receiving a second spoken input of the alphabetic character input from the user;

comparing the second spoken alphabetic character input received from the user to each of the more than one alphabetic character strings determined to be associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user that sound like the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user; and

if the second spoken alphabetic character input received from the user matches one of the more than one alphabetic character strings determined to be associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user, designating the alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones that matches the second spoken alphabetic character input received from the user as a correct alphabetic character.

2.　　(Previously Presented)　　The method of Claim 1, prior to receiving the first spoken alphabetic character input from the user, prompting a user to enter by one or more spoken alphabetic characters; and

loading into the speech recognition engine a grammar definition defining a set of alphabetic characters acceptable to the speech recognition engine as responsive to the prompt to the user to enter by one or more alphabetic characters.

3.　　(Previously Presented)　　The method of Claim 2, wherein the set of alphabetic characters includes the characters a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, and z.

4.　　(Previously Presented)　　The method of Claim 3, wherein the alphabetic character input received from the user includes one or more alphabetic characters from the set of alphabetic characters of Claim 3.

5.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 4, wherein the set of alphabetic characters further includes phonetic versions of the alphabetic characters of Claim 4.

6.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 5, wherein the alphabetic character input received from the user includes plural alphabetic characters from the set of alphabetic characters of Claim 5.

7.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 6, wherein the alphabetic character input received from the user includes one or more combinations of alphabetic characters from the set of alphabetic characters of Claim 6.

8.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 2, wherein the set of alphabetic characters includes numerals associated with dual tone multi-frequency (DTMF) key tones from a telephone keypad.

9.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 8, wherein the alphabetic character input received from the user includes one or more DTMF key tones.

10.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 9, wherein numerals associated with DTMF key tones of the telephone keypad include 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

11.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 10, wherein the set of alphabetic characters includes all alphabetic characters associated with the DTMF key tones.

12.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 1, wherein prior to querying the user for verification that the recognized alphabetic character input is the same as the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user, converting the recognized alphabetic character input from a digital format to an audio format.

13.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 12, wherein querying the user for verification that the recognized alphabetic character input is the same as the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user includes presenting the audio formatted recognized character input to the user.

14.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 13, wherein the audio formatted recognized alphabetic character input is presented to the user telephonically.

15.   (Previously Presented)   The method of Claim 1, wherein prior to receiving from the user the DTMF key tone for each of the plural spoken alphabetic characters input by the user:

prompting the user for the DTMF key tone for each of the plural spoken alphabetic characters input by the user; and

querying the user to verify that the DTMF key tones received from the user are correct.

16.-19. (Cancelled)

20.   (Currently Amended) A   system   for   improving   alphabetic   speech recognition by a speech recognition engine, comprising:

a speech recognition engine operative

to receive a first spoken alphabetic character input comprising plural spoken alphabetic characters from a user;

to convert the first spoken alphabetic character input from an audio format to a digital format and to recognize the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;

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to query the user for verification that the recognized alphabetic character input is the same as the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;

to receive from the user a dual tone multi-frequency (DTMF) key tone for each of the plural first spoken alphabetic characters received from the user, if the recognized alphabetic character input is not the same as the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user; ~~and~~

to designate the one alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user that matches the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user as a correct alphabetic character input if one alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user matches the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user[[.]];

prior to designating the alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user as a correct alphabetic character input requested from the user, the speech recognition engine being further operative:

to determine whether an alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF tones received from the user sounds like the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;

to query the user to determine whether the alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user match the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;

to receive a second spoken input of the alphabetic character input from the user if more than one alphabetic character string is determined to be associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user that sound like the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user;

to compare the second spoken alphabetic character input received from the user to each of the more than one alphabetic character strings determined to be associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user that sound like the first spoken alphabetic character input received from the user; and

to designate the alphabetic character string associated with the DTMF key tones that matches the second spoken alphabetic character input received from the user as a correct alphabetic character if the second spoken alphabetic character input received

from the user matches one of the more than one alphabetic character strings determined to be associated with the DTMF key tones received from the user.

21.-23. (Cancelled)